

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The Listing of claims below replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. – 16 (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt adhesive ~~composition~~ suitable for bonding a polar leather layer to a non-polar substrate, comprising:

(a) a block copolymer having at least one A block and at least one B block, wherein:

(i) each A block is a mono alkenyl arene polymer block and each B block is a controlled distribution copolymer block of at least one conjugated diene and at least one mono alkenyl arene;

(ii) each A block having an average molecular weight between about 3,000 and about 60,000 and each B block having an average molecular weight between about 30,000 and about 300,000;

(iii) each B block comprises terminal regions adjacent to the A block that are rich in conjugated diene units and one or more regions not adjacent to the A blocks that are rich in mono alkenyl arene units;

(iv) the total amount of mono alkenyl arene in the block copolymer is about 20 percent weight to about 80 percent weight;

(v) the weight percent of mono alkenyl arene in each B block is between about 10 percent and about 75 percent; ~~and~~

(vi) the styrene blockiness index of the block B is less than 40 percent, said styrene blockiness index being the proportion of styrene units in the block B having two styrene neighbors on the polymer chain; and

wherein the block copolymer has a Young's modulus below 25% elongation of less than 20 MPa and a rubber modulus or slope between 100 and 300% elongation of greater than 0.5 MPa;

(b) a hydrogenated hydrocarbon tackifying resin, with a softening point lower than 140°C, ~~preferably lower than 100°C and more preferably lower than 90°C~~, in a weight

proportion of 30 to 150 parts by weight of tackifying resin per 100 parts per weight of block copolymer ~~and preferably from 50 to 120 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer;~~

(c) a resin which is compatible with the mono alkenyl arene blocks, having a softening point lower than 140°C ~~and preferably lower than 110°C~~, in a weight proportion of from 10 to 80 parts by weight of resin ~~and preferably from 20 to 60 parts by weight of resin~~ per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer;

(d) optionally a melt flow improving poly(alkylene) resin, which is functionalized, in a weight proportion of from 0 to 30 parts by weight, ~~and preferably from 5 to 20 parts by weight~~ per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer, and

(e) stabilizers and/or additional auxiliaries in a weight proportion of from 0.1 to 1 part by weight per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer.

18. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt adhesive ~~composition~~ of claim 17 wherein in the block copolymer ~~(a)~~ mono alkenyl arene is styrene and the conjugated diene is isoprene, butadiene, or a mixture thereof.

19. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt adhesive ~~composition~~ of claim 17 wherein in the block copolymer ~~(a)~~ the conjugated diene is butadiene and wherein 20 to 80 mol percent of the condensed butadiene units in block B have 1,2-configuration.

20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt adhesive ~~composition~~ of claim 17 wherein the block copolymer ~~(a)~~ has the general configuration A-B, A-B-A, (A-B)_n, (A-B)_n-A, (A-B-A)_nX, or (A-B)_nX, wherein n is an integer from 2 to 30, ~~preferably from 2 to 6~~, X is coupling agent residue and wherein A and B have the meaning defined hereinbefore.

22. (canceled)

23. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt adhesive ~~composition~~ of claim 17 wherein component (b) comprises hydrogenated rosin esters ~~and preferably diglycerol esters or pentaerythritol esters of hydrogenated rosin~~, or hydrogenated hydrocarbon resin, and is present in a weight proportion of from 50 to 120 parts by weight resin per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer.

24. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt ~~adhesive composition~~ of claim 17 wherein component (c) comprises an aromatic hydrocarbon resin.

25. (currently amended) The ~~solvent-free~~, hot melt ~~adhesive composition~~ of claim 24 wherein component (c) comprises at least one of coumarone-indene resins, poly(alpha-methyl-styrene) resins, poly styrene resins, and vinyl toluene-(alpha-methyl-styrene) copolymers.

26. – 29. (canceled)

30. (new) The hot melt adhesive of claim 17 wherein the styrene blockiness index of the block B is less than 10 percent.

31. (new) The hot melt adhesive of claim 17, wherein the hydrogenated hydrocarbon tackifying resin has a softening point of lower than 100° C and is in a weight proportion of from 50 to 120 parts by weight of tackifying resin per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer.

32. (new) The hot melt adhesive of claim 17, wherein the resin which is compatible with the mono alkenyl arene blocks has a softening point lower than 110° C, and is in a weight proportion of from 20 to 60 parts by weight of resin per 100 parts by weight of block copolymer.